Allotment of railway land to railway employees for cultivation

1630. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government allot railway land to railway employees on license basis for cultivation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the railway land given for cultivation, so far;

(d) whether Government proposes to utilize such land for any other purpose to generate more revenues; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Railways have a policy to license vacant railway land not required for Railway's own use in the immediate future to its Group 'C' and 'D' category staff with preference to those belonging to SC/ST, OBC and weaker section of society in identified urban areas under Grow More Food (GMF) Scheme to prevent encroachment of its valuable land.

(c) Details are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) and (e) The vacant railway land is required by Railways for its future development works. However, till such time, the land is required by Railways for its own operational use, the same is put to various short-term uses like commercial licensing, Grow More Food (GMF) Scheme, etc. In addition, where potential exists, it is proposed to undertake commercial development of railway land through Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA). A total of 129 sites on various Railways have been identified and entrusted to Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) for commercial development for generation of more revenues.

Gauge conversion of Gujarat

1631. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat has proposed for Gauge conversion of a number of lines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when her Ministry is going to start gauge conversion; and

(d) what is the time-frame for planning and implementation of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. Government of Gujarat has requested for taking up new gauge conversion projects in Gujarat. The details and status of the proposed gauge conversions is as under: